NGO Monitor's 2007 Report on HRW: Appendix

This appendix contains the methodology, further explanations and data behind [NGO Monitor's report on Human Rights Watch's activities in 2007](#).

Research Methodology:

All publications in the Middle East and North Africa Section of the Human Rights Watch website were placed in the [NVivo](#) analysis software. Items were tagged to indicated the type of documented (as listed on the HRW site) as well the countries the document addressed.

This report analyses 261 items found in the Middle East and North Africa section of the Human Rights Watch website. In total 31 of these items were excluded from analysis as they were: focused on the UN, EU or a country outside the region but discussed people from the region (20); US activity in Iraq (6); provided no English content (2), were general items not referring to countries (3). These reports were related to Iraq (16), Morocco (2), Tunisia (2), Iran (1), or other (3). Some excluded reports related to multiple countries and some relate to no country.

The remaining articles were provided a score based on the rating system used in past reports. This system rates contents by allocating a points value based on the type of document (as classified by HRW). New document classifications are indicated in bold and these have been assigned a weighting based on their similarity to previous classifications. The types of documents are presented in Table 1.

Points	Type
10	Special Focus
9	Multi Country Report
8	Report / **world report essay**
7	Background Briefing / **memorandum** / **Q&A**
6	Campaign Document
5	Commentary
4	Press Release
3	Graphic/Video/**Audio**
2	Testimony/Oral Statement/**written statement**
1	Letter

Table 1 Point system by document type

The point values shown in Table 1 have also been used as column headings in tables later in this appendix to denote the document types.

A higher rating reflects greater investment of effort by HRW on the country; a lower rating means a lower priority and degree of involvement. Although the scale is subjective, it provides a consistent approach between the countries both in the current period of analysis and longitudinally through our other reports covering the past 6 years.

In addition to the overall effort applied to each country, the vocabulary used in the various publications was analysed. The NVivo software was used to facilitate analysis and extract references by country and by theme. To avoid false positives, the usage and context of all terms were manually considered before inclusion in the count. An item was not counted when:

- It referred to the name of an organisation or official e.g. Committee Against Torture
- It discussed a general principle of law or the usage of terminology by HRW
- It was part of the title of another publication (words used in the title of an HRW publication were counted once for the publication itself, but not for references to that publication)
- In the case of "Human Rights Violations" as in past analysis, only those cases that were prefixed with "grave" or "serious" were counted.
- In the case of "indiscriminate killing" the word killing was regarded as essential. References to "indiscriminate firing" or "indiscriminate attacks" are excluded.
- The use of human rights terminology does not specifically describe a violation by the country in question.

Additional discussion:

Palestinian "Armed Groups" – Avoiding Assigning Responsibility

HRW's publications regularly use the phrase "armed groups" or refer to Palestinian actions in general, avoiding naming specific actors responsible for terrorism. While an explanation is occasionally provided, e.g. in "Rockets and Shelling Violate Laws of War" (July 1) where HRW list the Palestinian armed groups as "Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Fatah's al-Aqsa Brigades, and the Popular Resistance Committees", most publications are not specific. In a total of 18 publications about one or more Palestinian groups in 2007, Hamas is mentioned in 14 documents, the PA / Fatah in 8, Islamic Jihad is mentioned in 4 and the al-Aqsa Brigades are mentioned in just 3 documents. Seven publications used the phrase "Palestinian armed groups".

In the case of Gaza, from which 783 rockets were launched at Israelis in 2007[1], Hamas has held power since the violent takeover in 2007, and has been responsible for and often encourages the attacks launched by the other groups. HRW only provides limited focus on these human rights violations, often burying this central fact amid criticism of Israel's responses.

---

[1] *Rocket threat from the Gaza Strip 2000-2007*, Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Israel Intelligence Heritage & Commemoration Center (IICC), http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/pdf/rocket_threat_e.pdf

In a notable but unusual exception, the press release headlined "Rockets and Shelling Violate Laws of War" (July 1), includes a statement by Joe Stork, deputy director of Human Rights Watch's Middle East division: "Hamas authorities in Gaza should end rocket attacks by all groups on Israeli towns". However, the press release also declares that, "amidst the ongoing factional fighting in Gaza between Hamas and Fatah, **Palestinian armed groups** continue to launch rockets toward Israel." (Emphasis by NGO Monitor).

In the 145 page report, "Indiscriminate Fire" (July 1), the generic term "Palestinian Armed Groups" is used instead of holding Hamas responsible. The al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades is named only twice in the report, and the Popular Resistance Committees is mentioned four times. The report also makes a general statement that "Palestinian rocket attacks violate international humanitarian law". HRW should assign the violation of international humanitarian law to those groups firing the rockets, as well as holding Hamas who control the territory responsible for not preventing them.

Focus of HRW by Palestinian group

The weighted score (using the same methodology as for countries) of the term Palestinians (as used in the main report) is broken down into the effort focused on Hamas, the PA / Fatah and Palestinian armed groups this is provided in Figure 1 in percentage terms.[2]

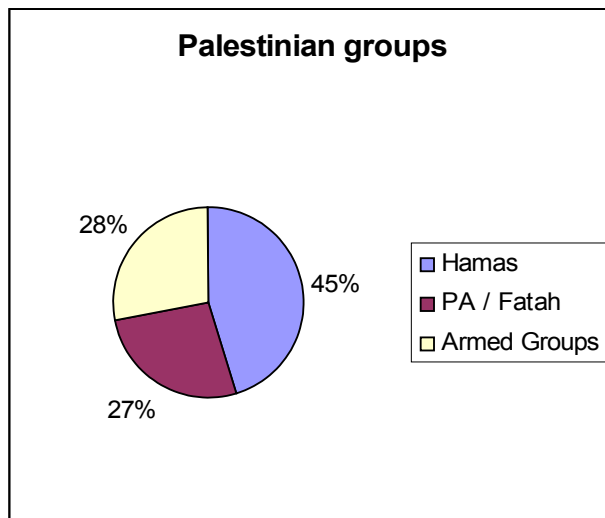**Figure 1 Division of HRW references to Palestinian groups in 2007**

The results in Figure 1 are calculated based on Table 2 which provides the weighted scores and Table 3 which provides the count by group and document type.

---

[2] To avoid double counting, publications with attention given to at least one of: the Palestinian Authority / Fatah, Hamas or "Palestinian armed groups" were included in the Palestinian count

	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Total	%
Armed Groups	0	0	8	7	0	5	16	0	0	0	36	28%
PA / Fatah	0	0	0	7	0	0	24	3	0	0	34	27%
Hamas	0	0	8	0	0	5	32	12	0	0	57	45%
											127	

Table 2 Weighted score and percentage of Palestinian groups by document type

	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Armed Groups	0	0	1	1	0	1	4	0	0	0
PA / Fatah	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	1	0	0
Hamas	0	0	1	0	0	1	8	4	0	0

Table 3 Count of Palestinian groups by document type

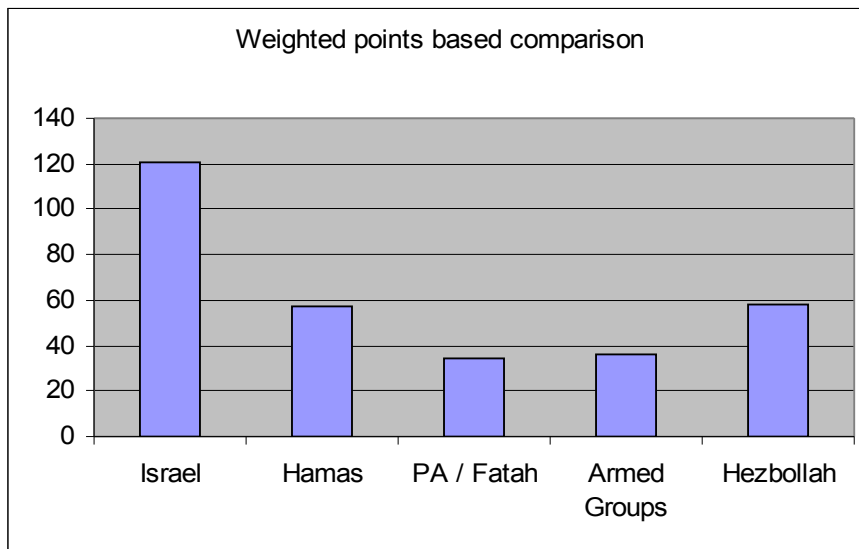In Figure 2 the actual scores are provided and compared to Israel and Hezbollah.

Figure 2 Weighted points based comparison

	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Total
Israel	0	0	16	7	0	15	64	18	0	1	121
Armed Groups	0	0	8	7	0	5	16	0	0	0	36
PA / Fatah	0	0	0	7	0	0	24	3	0	0	34
Hamas	0	0	8	0	0	5	32	12	0	0	57
Hezbollah	0	0	16	0	0	15	24	3	0	0	58

Figure 3 Weighted scores of Israel and other parties in the conflict

Where Figure 1shows the high level of criticism aimed not at the parties responsible, but rather at an amorphous "Palestinian armed groups", Figure 2 shows relative attention given to criticisms of each group in the conflict.

Torture

In 2006, HRW used the word torture between 120 and 160 times in reference to each of Egypt, Syria and Libya. The 2007 results shown in show a rise to 322 occurrences for Egypt and a drop to 3 for Syria and 35 for Libya. The second highest usage of torture in 2007 was Jordan with 68 occurrences. The 2007 results on torture demonstrate a phenomena where effort spent on one country detracts from the effort spent on others. This highlights the role of the NGOs agendas in focusing criticism and indicates a lack of impartiality and universality in the in HRW's work. The end result is over emphasis on some situations while under reporting serious human rights abuses in other countries. This undermines the human rights agenda.
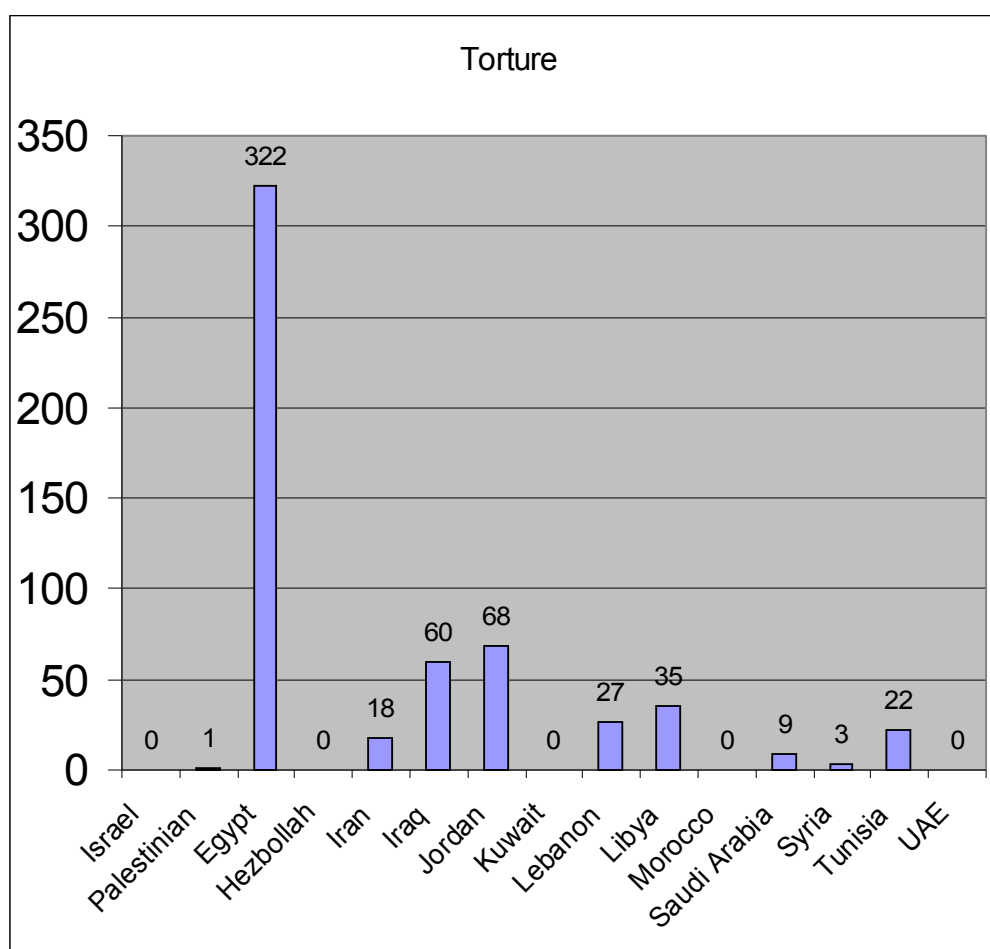

Figure 4 References to Torture

Data behind the results

Effort Analysis by country

Figure 5 is reproduced from the main report. It represents the effort (in points) spent on each country. It is derived from the data below in Table 4 which in turn is based on the data in Table 5.
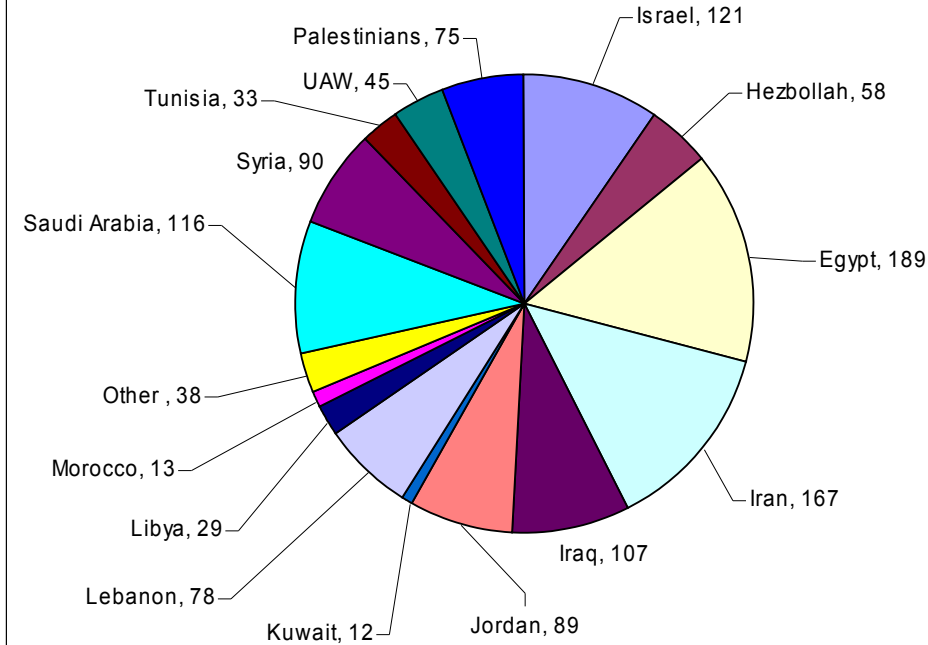
Weighted percentage by country in 2007

Figure 5Weighted percentage by country

Table 4 provides the totals and percentages used to create Figure 5. The total is broken down showing the number of points contributed to each country by each document type.

	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Total	%
Israel	0	0	16	7	0	15	64	18	0	1	121	10%
Palestinians	0	0	8	7	0	5	40	15	0	0	75	6%
Hezbollah	0	0	16	0	0	15	24	3	0	0	58	5%
Egypt	0	0	16	21	0	10	128	9	2	3	189	15%
Iran	0	0	0	21	0	5	124	12	2	3	167	13%
Iraq	0	0	16	28	0	25	32	3	2	1	107	8%
Jordan	0	0	8	14	0	25	36	3	0	3	89	7%
Kuwait	0	0	8	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	12	1%
Lebanon	0	0	24	7	0	10	32	3	2	0	78	6%
Libya	0	0	0	7	0	0	16	3	2	1	29	2%
Morocco	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	3	0	2	13	1%
Other	0	0	8	0	0	0	28	0	0	2	38	3%
Saudi Arabia	0	0	8	14	0	15	72	3	2	2	116	9%
Syria	0	0	8	0	0	25	52	3	0	2	90	7%
Tunisia	0	0	8	0	0	0	16	6	0	3	33	3%
UAW	0	0	8	7	0	0	24	6	0	0	45	4%
											1260	

Table 4 Weighted score and percentage by country and document type

Table 5 provides a count of the number of documents by document type. The total indicated the number of publications per country. Some documents are limited to one country; others involve multiple countries and have been counted against each of them. In the case of Palestinians, each document referring to one or more Palestinian group has been counted once in these results.

	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Total
Israel	0	0	2	1	0	3	16	6	0	1	29
Palestinians	0	0	1	1	0	1	10	5	0	0	18
Hezbollah	0	0	2	0	0	3	6	1	0	0	12
Egypt	0	0	2	3	0	2	32	3	1	3	46
Iran	0	0	0	3	0	1	31	4	1	3	43
Iraq	0	0	2	4	0	5	8	1	1	1	22
Jordan	0	0	1	2	0	5	9	1	0	3	21
Kuwait	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Lebanon	0	0	3	1	0	2	8	1	1	0	16
Libya	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	1	1	1	8
Morocco	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	2	5
Other	0	0	1	0	0	0	7	0	0	2	10
Saudi Arabia	0	0	1	2	0	3	18	1	1	2	28
Syria	0	0	1	0	0	5	13	1	0	2	22
Tunisia	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	2	0	3	10
UAW	0	0	1	1	0	0	6	2	0	0	10
TOTAL	0	0	19	19	0	30	175	30	6	23	302

Table 5 Count by document type and country

Effort Analysis Israel, Palestinians, Hezbollah

The graph in Figure 6 is taken from the main report. Israel is shown as 47% of the total weighted value spread between Israel, the Palestinians and Hezbollah.[3] This graph is based on Table 6 which shows the weighted scores and Table 7 which provides the count by document type.
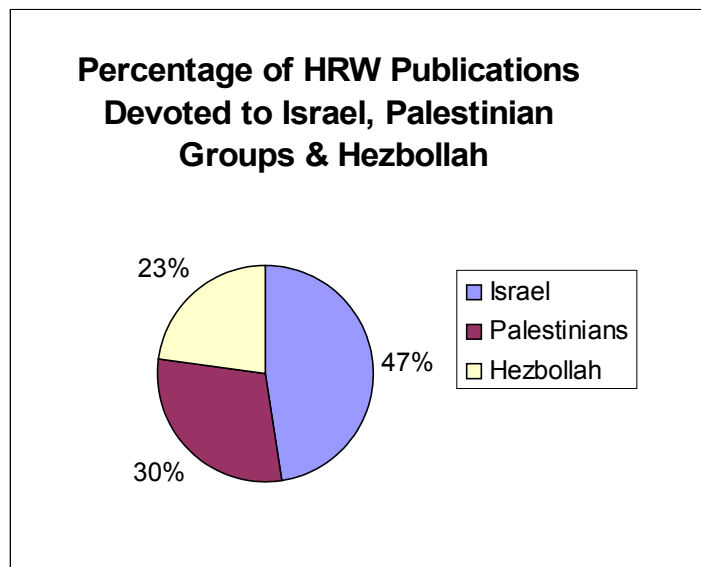

Figure 6 Focus on Israel, Palestinians and Hezbollah

---

[3] The actual value is 47.6 in the table it is rounded up while the graph rounds down to ensure a total of 100%.

	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Total	%
Israel	0	0	16	7	0	15	64	18	0	1	121	48%
Palestinians	0	0	8	7	0	5	40	15	0	0	75	30%
Hezbollah	0	0	16	0	0	15	24	3	0	0	58	23%
											254	

Table 6 Weighted score and percentage of Israel, Palestinian and Hezbollah by document type

	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Israel	0	0	2	1	0	3	16	6	0	1
Palestinians	0	0	1	1	0	1	10	5	0	0
Hezbollah	0	0	2	0	0	3	6	1	0	0

Table 7 Count of Israel, Palestinian and Hezbollah by document type

Weighted Effort 2005-2007

Figure 7 is taken from the main report, and is based on the data from Table 8 below. In Figure 7 the weighted score for 7 Middle East countries are shown over the last 3 years. The data for 2007 had already been presented. The 2006 data is derived from NGO Monitor's report on HRW in 2006. The 2005 data is derived from NGO Monitor's report on HRW in 2005.
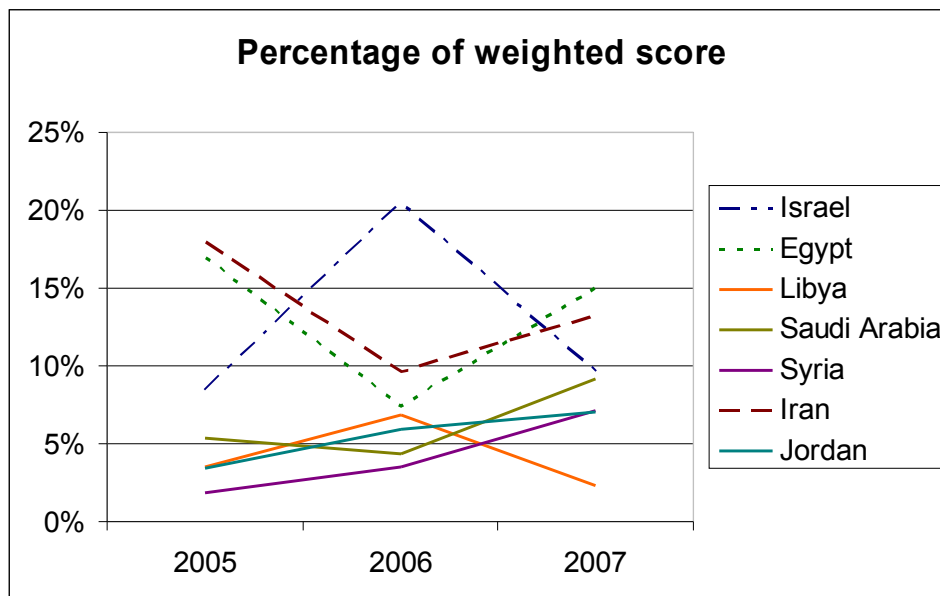

Figure 7 Percentage of weighted score by country

	2005 points	%	2006 points	%	2007	%
Israel	59	8%	223	20%	121	10%
Egypt	119	17%	81	7%	189	15%
Libya	25	4%	75	7%	29	2%
Saudi Arabia	38	5%	47	4%	116	9%
Syria	13	2%	38	3%	90	7%
Iran	126	18%	105	10%	167	13%
Jordan	24	3%	64	6%	89	7%
TOTAL	702		1088		1260	

Table 8 Count and percentage of weighted score by country

Use of key words

The language usage graph presented in the main report and below in Figure 8 is based on the data in Table 10. The column headings in Table 10 are presented in Table 9.
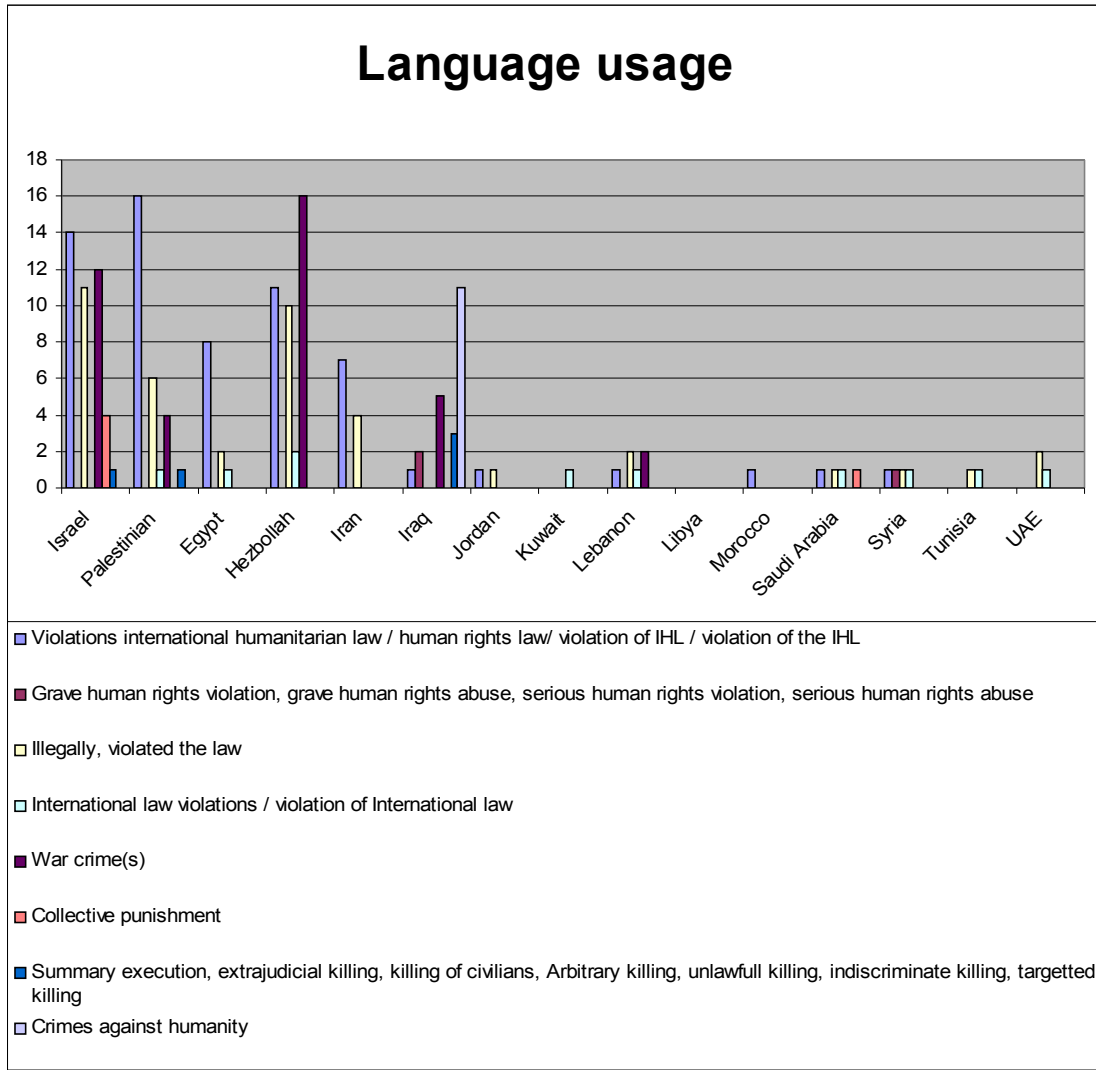

Figure 8 Language usage graph – general

Key	Terms
A	Violations international humanitarian law / human rights law/ violation of IHL / violation of the IHL
B	Grave human rights violation, grave human rights abuse, serious human rights violation, serious human rights abuse
C	Illegally, violated the law
D	International law violations / violation of International law
E	War crime(s)
F	Collective punishment
G	Summary execution, extrajudicial killing, killing of civilians, Arbitrary killing, unlawfull killing, indiscriminate killing, targeted killing
H	Crimes against humanity

Table 9 Key with terms examined

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Israel	14	0	11	0	12	4	1	0
Palestinian	16	0	6	1	4	0	1	0
Egypt	8	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
Hezbollah	11	0	10	2	16	0	0	0
Iran	7	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
Iraq	1	2	0	0	5	0	3	11
Jordan	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Kuwait	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Lebanon	1	0	2	1	2	0	0	0
Libya	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Morocco	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Saudi Arabia	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
Syria	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Tunisia	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
UAE	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 10 Count of key terms by country